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Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
Second session
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Agenda item 4 (c)
Mandated areas: health

Draft recommendations

Rapporteur: Willie **Littlechild**

1. The Permanent Forum reiterates the recommendations made in its report on its first session and:

(a) Urges the World Health Organization (WHO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and all United Nations bodies and agencies involved in programmes relating to health to incorporate indigenous healers and cultural perspectives on health and illness into their policies, guidelines and programmes, and to undertake regional consultations with indigenous peoples on these issues, in order to mainstream indigenous health issues into the United Nations system;

(b) Urges the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to undertake a study on the relationship between food security, subsistence agricultural practices and indigenous health and illness.

2. The Permanent Forum recommends that WHO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) convene a workshop on indigenous health, with the goal of addressing a system-wide strategy to address the health needs of indigenous peoples and setting out the terms of reference for a study on the health needs of indigenous peoples, with particular emphasis on indigenous children and women including infant mortality, reproductive rights, sterilization, domestic abuse and addiction and the collection of data relating to these issues. The Forum requests that its focal point and a representative of the Indigenous People's Caucus on Health be invited to attend and be provided the means to participate.

3. The Permanent Forum urges the Global Alliance For Vaccination Initiatives (GAVI) to sponsor a workshop and also urges UNDP to co-sponsor a workshop to expand global programmes for immunization and vaccination of indigenous women and children and to assess the need for safety protocols relating thereto. The Permanent Forum recommends that its focal point in health and a representative of the Indigenous People's Caucus on Health be invited to attend and be provided the means to participate.

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4. The Permanent Forum recommends that UNICEF prepare a report on indigenous children who have limited or no access to direct health-care services, including recommendations to improve health-care access.

New recommendations

General

5. The Permanent Forum urges UNICEF, the lead United Nations agency on children, to adopt a policy relating to indigenous children and to designate an agency focal point on indigenous children. The Permanent Forum urges UNICEF to include questions on ethnicity, cultural and tribal affiliation and language in its Demographic and Health and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys, in order to obtain disaggregated data on the goals set forth at the World Summit for Children and the health needs of indigenous children.

6. The Permanent Forum urges WHO, in implementing the outlined global strategy on health of marginalized ethnic populations, to gather data and extend programme services to indigenous peoples who self-identify as indigenous based on criterion relating to ethnicity, cultural or tribal affiliation and language.

7. The Permanent Forum urges WHO to engage in a global consultation with indigenous peoples and others on its participatory research guidelines and seek the advice of the Permanent Forum on the guidelines.

8. The Permanent Forum urges UNICEF, UNDP, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Global Fund for AIDS to gather and disaggregate data on indigenous infants, children and mothers based on criterion relating to ethnicity, cultural and tribal affiliation and language.

Environment/health/persistent organic pollutants

9. The Permanent Forum recommends that the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) urge States to ratify the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and adopt the recommendations of the Conference of the Parties relating to its implementation.

10. That the Permanent Forum invite UNDP and the Statistical Branch of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to present a report at the 2004 session of the Forum, setting forth the progress made to date on the Millennium Development Goals, with special focus on alleviating poverty and its affects on indigenous peoples and communities.

11. That the Committee on the Rights of the Child, as the treaty monitoring body for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, review the compliance of States Parties with article 24, which recognized the basic right of all children to "the provision of adequate and nutritional foods and clean drinking water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution", with particular attention to its impact on traditional subsistence foods, and that the Committee address those issues during the day of general discussion on the indigenous child in September 2003.

12. The Permanent Forum recommends that the Special Rapporteur on toxic waste, with the participation of the Committee on the Rights on the Child, UNEP and WHO, conduct a workshop on the impacts of persistent organic pollutants and pesticides on indigenous peoples, including examining the promotion and use of pesticides by multinational corporations.

HIV/AIDS

13. The Permanent Forum recommends that the Global Fund and UNAIDS participate in the Inter-Agency Support Group and that the Fund and UNAIDS present a report on the impact of their programmes and activities on indigenous peoples and communities to the Permanent Forum at its 2004 session, with specific focus on preventative programmes and activities impacting children and infants.

14. The Permanent Forum recommends that the Global Fund review their funding strategy in order to include access by indigenous non-governmental organizations and health providers for community-based culturally appropriate HIV/AIDS programmes.

Other specific issues

15. The Permanent Forum recommends the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences to pay special attention to the impact of violence against indigenous women, including war-related violence and domestic violence.

16. The Permanent Forum recommends that the Special Rapporteur on the right to health pay special attention in his work to the right to health as contained in treaties between indigenous peoples and States.

17. The Permanent Forum recommends that the United Nations agencies supporting and promoting the Healthy Environments for Children Alliance, namely WHO, UNICEF, UNEP and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UN-HABITAT), include a particular focus on indigenous children and youth.

18. The Permanent Forum urges States to undertake and promote the expansion of their national health systems in order to provide holistic health programmes for indigenous children that incorporate preventive medical practices and family and community participation. States are urged to address the issues of malnutrition of indigenous children victimized by poverty by adopting special measures to ensure and protect the cultivation of traditional food crops.

19. The Permanent Forum recommends that the Working Group on Indigenous Populations undertake a study on genocidal and ethnocidal practices perpetrated on indigenous peoples, including programmes for sterilization of indigenous women and girls, the use of indigenous communities as subjects for nuclear testing or storage of radioactive waste and the testing of unapproved drugs on indigenous children and peoples.

20. The Permanent forum recommends that WHO, in conjunction with indigenous health providers, undertake a study on the prevalence and causes of suicide among indigenous youth, and efforts being undertaken, including culturally based approaches, to address suicide prevention and the promotion of mental health and wellness.